DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 439 235 CE 079 832

AUTHOR	Molek, Carol
TITLE	ABLE Assessment Practices. Final Report, Fiscal Year 1998-1999.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Education, Washington, DC.; Pennsylvania State Dept. of Education, Harrisburg. Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.
PUB DATE	1999-06-30
NOTE	67p.; Project Coordinator was Lori Forlizzi.
CONTRACT	98-99-9012
AVAILABLE FROM	Advance State Literacy Resource Center, Pennsylvania Department of Education, Floor 11, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333. Tel: 717-783-9192; Web site: http://www.cas.psu.edu/docs/pde/able/slre.html.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; *Educational Assessment; Evaluation Criteria; Evaluation Needs; *Literacy Education; State Programs; *Student Evaluation; Test Reviews; Test Selection; Test Use; Test Validity; Testing; *Tests
IDENTIFIERS	*Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT

A project was conducted to revise the list of assessment instruments that Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE)-funded agencies are permitted to use to report learner gains. Through a mail survey, the project researched 19 standardized assessment instruments used by agencies for reporting learner gains and identified areas in which appropriate instruments were needed. Instruments that were in use and others that were identified as having potential use were examined to determine whether they met acceptability requirements. Recommendations for revising the list of acceptable instruments were submitted to the bureau. The project found that five standardized instruments--the TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education) Survey Edition, the TABE Complete Battery, the Official GED (General Educational Development) Practice Tests, the GED Tests, and the BEST (Basic English Skills Test)--are the most popular instruments among responding agencies, and that respondents are generally satisfied with those instruments. A need was identified for standardized instruments that would supply better information on beginning-level readers, career-specific learners, and upper-level ESL (English as a Second Language) learners. (Appendixes to the report include the survey and lists of assessment instruments and publishers.) (Author/KC)

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ED 439 235

ABLE Assessment Practices

Final Report

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TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center

Fiscal Year 1998-1999

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Funding: $27,901
Project #: 98-99-9012

CE 079832

The activity which is the subject of this report was supported in part by the U. S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U. S. Department of Education or the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and no official endorsement by these agencies should be inferred.

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ABSTRACT **Project No.** 98-99-9012

Grant Recipient:
Carol Molek
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Program Name: ABLE Assessment Practices
Grant Allocation: $27,901
Project Period: July 1, 1998 - June 30, 1999
Project Director: Carol Molek

Project Purpose: This project provided data to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, as it revised its list of assessment instruments allowable for use by ABLE-funded agencies in reporting learner gains to the Bureau. The project researched the standardized instruments used by agencies for reporting learner gains and identified areas where appropriate instruments were needed. Instruments that were in use and others that were identified as good candidates for use by agencies for the purpose of reporting learner gains were examined to determine whether they met requirements for being acceptable reporting instruments. Recommendations for revising the list of acceptable instruments for reporting were submitted to the Bureau.

Project Outcomes: A mail survey of ABLE-funded agencies found that five standardized instruments -- The TABE Survey Edition, the TABE Complete Battery Edition, the Official GED Practice Tests, the GED Tests, and the BEST -- are the most popular instruments among responding agencies for reporting learner gains. Respondents are generally satisfied with the instruments they are using for reporting learner gains, especially when they are supplemented with other standardized or informal instruments. A need was identified for standardized instruments that would supply better information on beginning-level readers, career-specific learners, and upper-level ESL learners.

Impact: The project reviewed 19 assessment instruments to determine whether they met requirements for being acceptable reporting instruments. Special attention was given to locating instruments to meet the needs of the three learner groups identified above. Recommendations for revising the list of acceptable instruments based on the research and instrument reviews were submitted to the Bureau for review and consideration.

Products or Training Developed: A final report summarizes project activities, research findings, and recommendations.

Products Available From: the AdvancE State Literacy Resource Center.

Project Continuation and/or Future Implications: The project provides standards for review of instruments that may be useful in the future as instruments are revised or new ones become available.

Conclusions/Recommendations: At this point in time, the list of instruments appropriate for reporting learner gains is short. In the future, other possibilities in new or revised instruments should continue to be explored.

Additional Comments:

Introduction

Purpose and Objectives of the Project

"ABLE Assessment Practices" provided data and information to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, as it began the process of revising its list of assessment instruments allowable for use by ABLE-funded agencies in reporting learner gains to the Bureau. The project objectives were:

1. To research, through a mail survey to ABLE-funded agencies, the standardized instruments currently being used in their service-providing programs, and to report instruments, publishers, and the number and type of agency (e.g., volunteer, school district, community-based organization, etc.) using each instrument;
2. To research, through a follow-up telephone survey with select agencies responding to the mail survey, why agencies are using particular instruments for pre- and post-testing, identify needs and constraints guiding the selection of assessment instruments, identify gaps or areas where appropriate instruments are critically needed, and to report these findings;
3. To gather information on standardized assessments that meet the Bureau's requirements and that may be appropriate for populations served by ABLE programs, including literacy, ABE, GED, ESL, and work-focus;
4. To examine potential instruments, and those that are being used in agencies, to determine their appropriateness of use related to the Bureau's requirements;
5. To develop a revised listing of acceptable standardized instruments, to be used by agencies for reporting educational gains, for approval and dissemination by the Bureau.

Rationale and Background of the Project

The ABLE Bureau requires that agencies with Act 143 and/or Section 322 funding administer standardized pre- and post-tests to cooperating students and report

the scores to the Bureau. This data, as an indicator of learner gains, is part of the information used to evaluate individual agency and overall state efforts to increase skills of the adults served by these programs. The Bureau requires that the same instrument be used to pre- and post-test a particular student. Furthermore, the permissible instruments are those that are standardized on an appropriate adult population and include at least two different but equivalent forms ("Instructions: Adult Basic & Literacy Education Data Forms," July, 1998). Currently, ABLE program performance standards state that each provider must submit matched pre- and post-test scores for at least 35% of enrolled students. The requirements that the Bureau sets for acceptable reporting instruments are necessary because of the way that the data is used: to make comparisons of gain across students and programs. Other standardized and non-standardized instruments play very important roles in the work that programs do. The Bureau encourages the use of a variety of assessment tools to meet various purposes within programs.

There has been some confusion in the field over which instruments are appropriate to use for the purposes of reporting learner gains. In the recent past the Bureau accepted alternative methods of reporting learner gains, including published informal assessments and teacher- or program-developed assessments. However, more recently, evolution of the field has increased the need for accountability and the Bureau has gradually increased the stringency of guidelines for demonstrating learner gains. During this transitional time, the Bureau's list of acceptable assessment instruments (see the July, 1998 "Instructions: Adult Basic & Literacy Education Data Forms") included some that are not standardized (e.g., ESLOA/LVA ESL Oral Assessment), others that, although standardized, are not normed on adults (e.g., the Secondary Level English Proficiency Test), and those that, as locator tests, are not appropriate for reporting pre- and post-test scores to document learner gains (e.g. the

TABE Locator). Many agencies are looking for instruments that meet the Bureau's requirements and mesh with their program's instructional philosophies, learner characteristics, and learner goals. The Bureau is seeking to refine the list of instruments that are acceptable for reporting learner gains to the state while including instruments that meet the needs of agencies and the learners they serve. The Bureau commissioned this project in order to collect data to guide decision-making regarding the revamping of the list.

The project extended previous research on assessment done in Pennsylvania (Adult Education Linkage Services, 1991; Zellers, 1986) in three ways. First, it focused on standardized instruments and the extent to which they meet the Bureau's current requirements of being standardized on an adult population and including at least two equivalent forms for reporting educational gains. Second, it gathered updated information on standardized assessments to determine their appropriateness. For example, a revised version of the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE), a widely-used assessment in ABLE programs, has recently been introduced with some significant changes from the previous version; this would not be represented in either previous project. Third, unlike the previous projects, the current project also considered numerous populations served by ABLE-funded service providers, including literacy, Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Educational Development (GED), English as a Second Language (ESL), and work-focus.

Project Time Frame

During Fall, 1998, a brief mail survey on use of assessment instruments was developed and distributed to 262 directors on the Bureau's mailing list of agencies receiving instructional funds. Survey results were analyzed and summarized during the early months of 1999. Information on lesser-used instruments that may be appropriate for tracking learner gains for various populations served by ABLE (literacy, ABE,

GED, ESL, and work-focus) was located and collected throughout the project. Follow-up telephone interviews were conducted with a subset of agencies that had responded to the mail survey at the end of the project year, so that project staff could capture the experiences that the respondents had with the instruments during the project year. In late Spring, 1999, instruments were targeted for in-depth review based on results of the mail survey, telephone interviews, and search for instruments. In late Spring and early Summer 1999, reviews of the instruments were completed, recommendations to the Bureau were summarized, and the Final Report was compiled.

Project Staff and Key Personnel

The Project Director was Carol Molek. Ms. Molek has over 15 years experience directing adult programs for the Tuscarora Intermediate Unit and developing and implementing special projects. She has successfully directed numerous Section 353 projects for the Bureau, several of those focusing on research on and development of assessment tools and practices. She co-authored, along with Lori Forlizzi and Barbara Van Horn, the "Assessment for Adult Learners" training module being delivered throughout the state as part of the ABLE-funded Training Module Project. The module is an overview of critical concepts and information regarding assessment in the adult education environment. She directed all project activities, oversaw fiscal management of the project, and reviewed the mail survey, draft Final Report, and recommendations to the Bureau. The Project Coordinator was Lori Forlizzi. She had prior experience conducting survey and telephone interview research and research-focused 353 projects in Pennsylvania, including a statewide survey of ABLE service provision during the 1993 - 1994 project year. She co-authored the "Assessment for Adult Learners" training module and has served as the statewide lead assessment trainer for the module as well as an assessment trainer for the South Central Professional Development Center. She has also served as a statewide resource person on

assessment issues. She developed the mail survey, analyzed and summarized the results, conducted the follow-up telephone interviews, selected instruments for review, reviewed the instruments, drafted recommendations to the Bureau, and wrote the Final Report. Ms. Sharon Fisher, a staff assistant at the Adult Education and Job Training Center, oversaw ordering of assessment materials for review.

Audience for this Report

The audience for this report primarily includes staff of the ABLE Bureau and staff of ABLE-funded programs.

Project Dissemination

Copies of this report will be filed permanently at the following locations:

1) Pennsylvania Department of Education

Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education

333 Market Street, 12th Floor

Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

2) AdvancE State Literacy Resource Center

333 Market Street, 11th Floor

Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Statement of the Problem

"ABLE Assessment Practices" provided data and information to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, as it began the process of revising its list of instruments allowable for use by ABLE-funded agencies in reporting learner gains to the Bureau.

Project Goals and Objectives

Project objectives were:

1. To research, through a mail survey to ABLE-funded agencies, the standardized instruments currently being used in their service-providing programs, and to report

instruments, publishers, and the number and type of agency (e.g., volunteer, school district, community-based organization, etc.) using each instrument;

2. To research, through a follow-up telephone survey with select agencies responding to the mail survey, why agencies are using particular instruments for pre- and post-testing, identify needs and constraints guiding the selection of assessment instruments, identify gaps or areas where appropriate instruments are critically needed, and to report these findings;

3. To gather information on standardized assessments that meet the Bureau's requirements and that may be appropriate for populations served by ABLE programs, including literacy, ABE, GED, ESL, and work-focus;

4. To examine potential instruments, and those that are being used in agencies, to determine their appropriateness of use related to the Bureau's requirements;

5. To develop a revised listing of acceptable standardized instruments, to be used by agencies for reporting educational gains, for approval and dissemination by the Bureau.

Procedures Employed

"ABLE Assessment Practices" was conducted in two parts. During Part I, a brief mail survey was designed that gathered information on published assessment instruments were using to report learner gains and for other purposes. The survey was mailed to directors of 262 ABLE agencies receiving instructional funds. A follow-up, reminder mailing in November was completed in order to increase the survey response rate. Also, during Part I, information on lesser-used instruments that may be appropriate for tracking learner gains for various populations served by ABLE (literacy, ABE, GED, ESL, and work-focus) was gathered through a variety of strategies described in a later section of this report. During Part II, survey results were analyzed and summarized. Follow-up telephone interviews were conducted with 13% of agencies that had responded to the mail survey at the end of the project year, so that

project staff could capture the experiences that the respondents had with the instruments during the project year. The agencies interviewed were selected to represent the types and geographical locations of agencies responding to the mail survey. Also during Part II, instruments were targeted for in-depth review based on results of the mail survey, telephone interviews, and search for instruments. Reviews of the instruments were completed, recommendations to the Bureau were summarized, and the Final Report was compiled.

Objectives Achieved

Objective 1: To research, through a mail survey to ABLE-funded agencies, the standardized instruments currently being used in their service-providing programs, and to report instruments, publishers, and the number and type of agency (e.g., volunteer, school district, community-based organization, etc.) using each instrument.

In October, 1998, a survey to gather information on published assessment instruments then being used by ABLE agencies for reporting learner gains to the state or for other purposes was mailed to 262 directors on the Bureau's mailing list of agencies receiving instructional funds (a copy of the survey is included in Appendix A). By the end of November, only 68% of the agencies had responded. To increase the response rate, a second mailing of the survey to non-responding agencies was conducted in November 1998. Two-hundred and eighteen agencies, or a total of 83% of the agencies contacted, eventually responded to the survey (two agencies indicated they were no longer conducting programs). The following analyses thus include the data from 216 responding ABLE programs.

Types of agencies responding to the survey. Agencies were asked to identify themselves as one of the following types: literacy council, school district, intermediate unit, library, community-based organization, community college, or

"other." The categories that respondents listed under "other" were numerous, including institution, university, state correctional institution, vocational-technical school, college, library literacy program, county prison, post-secondary trade-technical school, community corrections, alternative high school, non-profit organization, union-based organization, correctional facility, long-term health care facility, social service agency, and public housing. The table in Appendix B shows the number and percentage of respondents identifying themselves under each category. Not surprisingly, the greatest proportion of respondents (30%) identified themselves as community-based organizations, followed by school districts (19%), literacy councils (10%), state correctional institutions (10%), and intermediate units (9%).

Published assessment instruments used for reporting learner gains to the state. The survey asked respondents to indicate which of nine published instruments or systems they use for reporting learner gains to the state, including the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Survey Edition, the TABE Complete Battery Edition, the Basic English Skills Test (BEST), the Adult Basic Learning Examination (ABLE), Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) assessments, the Official GED Practice Tests, the GED Tests, Reading Evaluation Adult Diagnosis (READ), and the English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA). Agencies were also given the opportunity to write in the names of other instruments being used for this purpose and were asked to include the name of the publisher of each instrument that they wrote in.

Project staff decided to collect data on all instruments that agencies were using to report learner gains, and then to examine each in order to make a determination as to whether it was standardized. This procedure spared respondents from making their own determination as to whether the instruments they were using were standardized, and allowed the project to capture the range of instruments actually being used for

reporting learner gains whether they were standardized or not. Therefore, both standardized and informal instruments thought to be commonly used by ABLE-funded agencies were included on the survey.

Two-hundred and twelve, or 98% of respondents, indicated that they were using at least one published instrument to report learner gains to the state. Appendix C shows the instruments used to report learner gains, whether or not the instrument(s) are standardized, the number, type, and percentage of educational service agencies using each instrument, and the publishers of those instruments. (Note: the information in the Appendix regarding publisher and standardization status reflects the most recent edition of the instrument or instruments; data provided by respondents was not always clear about which edition of an instrument was being used, or in the case of CASAS and the Brigance assessments, which particular instrument was being used). Since numerous agency types were indicated by respondents, only the top nine agency types are included in this table; the table accounts for 92% of the respondents. Seventeen instruments or systems that at least three agencies indicated they are using are included in the table. A list of other instruments named by at least one but fewer than three agencies is included in Appendix D. Often, complete names were not given for these instruments, nor were names of publishers given, so it is difficult to make sense of some of the responses included in the list. Where possible, names of publishers are included in the list.

By far the most popular instrument for reporting learner gains across agency types included in the table is the Official GED Practice Tests. This was the top reported instrument by all agency types except state correctional institutions and universities. The most popular instruments for reporting learner gains appear to be the Official GED Practice Tests, the GED Tests, the TABE Survey and Complete Battery, and the BEST. CASAS assessments and the ABLE are used to a lesser extent for this purpose. The

Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) is used by a small number of most agency types.

The most popular instruments for reporting learner gains indicated by responding school districts were the Official GED Practice Tests (78%), the GED Tests (54%), and the TABE Survey and Complete Battery Editions (both at 29%). These four instruments were also those most likely to be used by state correctional institutions, intermediate units, and vocational-technical schools as well. The instruments most frequently indicated by responding state correctional institutions included the TABE Complete Battery Edition (86%) followed by the TABE Survey Edition, the Official GED Practice Tests, and the GED Tests, each at 68%. Those indicated by responding intermediate units included the GED Practice Tests, the GED Tests, and TABE Survey Edition (all at 58%), and the TABE Complete Battery Edition (42%). Those indicated by responding vocational-technical schools included the Official GED Practice Tests (100%), followed by the TABE Survey and Complete Battery Editions and the GED Tests (all at 33%).

Community-based organizations, school districts, and literacy councils tended to report using the widest variety of instruments for reporting learner gains. The BEST was a popular choice for agencies other than school districts, state correctional institutions, intermediate units, and vocational-technical schools. The most popular instruments for reporting learner gains indicated by responding community-based organizations were the Official GED Practice Tests (44%), The GED Tests and the BEST (both at 28%) and the TABE Complete Battery Edition (23%). Those indicated by responding literacy councils include the BEST and the Official GED Practice Tests (both 67%), followed by the TABE Survey Edition (48%) and the GED Tests (38%). For libraries the TABE Survey Edition and the GED Practice Tests (both at 44%) were

followed in popularity by the BEST, the GED Tests, and the Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT), all at 22%.

The most popular instruments for reporting learner gains indicated by responding community colleges included The Official GED Practice Tests and the GED Tests (both at 73%) followed by the TABE Complete Battery Edition (45%) and the BEST (36%). Those indicated by responding universities included the TABE Complete Battery Edition (80%), followed by the BEST, The Official GED Practice Tests, and the GED Tests, all at 40%.

As previously noted, the instruments that respondents indicated they were using to report learner gains were reviewed after the survey results were in to make a determination as to whether or not they were standardized. An instrument was considered "standardized" if it requires administration under a standard set of conditions (including standard stimulus materials, items, and procedures), the use of consistent procedures for scoring and interpreting the results, if it has been normed on a substantially large group of individuals, if it provides standard (scaled) scores, and if it has demonstrated reliability and validity. Seven of the instruments/systems included in the table were not reviewed for this project: the TABE Complete Battery, the TABE Survey, the ABLE, the BEST, the CASAS assessments, the Official GED Practice Tests, and the GED Tests. This is because it is widely known that these instruments are psychometrically sound, standardized instruments widely used with adult learners. The CASAS is actually a system of instruments including informal and alternative assessments. While the survey was not powerful enough to determine which of the CASAS assessments were being used by respondents for reporting learner gains, the "introductory" systems promoted by CASAS and introduced through basic training required to purchase and use CASAS assessments (the Life Skills System Survey/Achievement Pre and Post Tests and the Employability Competency System

Survey/Achievement Pre and Post Tests) -- those most likely to be used by agencies who are in the early adoption stages of CASAS -- are standardized.

The other ten instruments/systems included in Appendix C were reviewed as part of this project to confirm whether or not they were standardized. These were the READ, the ESLOA, the WRAT-III, the Wonderlic Basic Skills Test (WBST), the Secondary Level English Proficiency Test (SLEP), the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised (WRMT-R), The Adult Measure of Essential Skills (AMES), the Slosson Oral Reading Test-Revised (SORT-R), and the Brigance Inventories that are appropriate for use with adults: the Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Essential Skills; the Brigance Diagnostic Life Skills Inventory; and the Brigance Diagnostic Employability Skills Inventory. The "Contemporary GED" tests category that came out of the survey included curriculum-based assessments as well as Contemporary's "Diagnostic Pre-tests for GED Instruction" and "Evaluative Post-tests for GED Readiness." It is widely known that the curriculum-based assessments included in these instructional series are not standardized; however, the diagnostic pre-tests and evaluative post-tests were examined for the project. As previously noted, the status of each instrument in terms of standardization is indicated in the table in Appendix C.

The top five instruments used for reporting learner gains as indicated by respondents to this survey are standardized instruments (the Official GED Practice Tests, the GED Tests, the TABE Survey and Complete Battery, and the BEST). Many of the others used for this purpose are standardized as well (e.g., CASAS, ABLE, the WRAT-III, the WBST, the SLEP, the WRMT-R, the AMES, and the SORT-R. However, it should be noted that not all of the instruments that respondents indicated on this survey that they are using to report learner gains are standardized: these include the READ, the ESLOA, the three Brigance inventories, and the Contemporary diagnostic pre-tests and evaluative post-tests. The survey results may overestimate the

number of non-standardized instruments being used to report learner gains. Follow-up interviews with 13% of the responding agencies (see Objective 2) indicated that at least some responding agencies had indicated use of non-standardized instruments at the beginning of the project year but during the year had discontinued use of these and adopted standardized instruments to be in line with the Bureau's requirements.

This objective explored whether the instruments being used by agencies to report learner gains are standardized instruments. The question of whether the standardized instruments being used to report learner gains are suitable for use with the adult populations of ABLE-funded agencies in relation to the Bureau's requirements was explored through Objective 4.

Published assessment instruments used for other purposes. The survey also asked respondents to indicate which of nine published instruments they use for purposes other than reporting learner gains to the state, including the TABE Survey, the TABE Complete Battery, the BEST, the ABLE, CASAS assessments, the Official GED Practice Tests, the GED Tests, the READ, and the ESLOA. They were again given the opportunity to write in the names of other instruments and were asked to include the name of the publisher of each instrument that they wrote in.

One hundred and seventy-one agencies, or 79% of respondents, indicated that they were using at least one published instrument for purposes other than reporting learner gains to the state. Appendix E shows the instruments being used for other purposes, and the number, type, and percentage of educational service agencies using each instrument. (The publishers of those instruments are shown in the Key in Appendix C). Again, only the top nine agency types are included in the table, representing 92% of the responding agencies. Instruments that at least three agencies indicated they are using are included in the table. A list of other instruments named by at least one but fewer than three agencies is included in Appendix F. Since complete

names of instruments and publishers were often not provided by respondents, the list is as complete and accurate as possible.

Again, the most popular instrument used for purposes other than reporting learner gains is the Official GED Practice Tests. This was the top reported instrument by all agency types. The most popular instruments used for purposes other than reporting learner gains appear to be, once again, the Official GED Practice Tests, the GED Tests, and the TABE Survey and Complete Battery Editions. It appears that the BEST, ABLE, and CASAS assessments are not widely used for purposes other than reporting learner gains to the state. The SORT is reportedly used by almost a quarter of responding libraries and universities. The WRAT is again reportedly used by a small number of most agency types. Nineteen percent of responding literacy councils also report using the ESLOA for purposes other than reporting learner gains.

The most popular instruments for "other purposes" reported by school districts were the Official GED Practice Tests (49%) followed by the GED Tests (27%) and the TABE Survey Edition (22%). The instruments most frequently indicated by responding state correctional institutions included The Official GED Practice Tests (95%), The GED Tests (91%), and the TABE Survey Edition (86%). Those indicated by responding intermediate units include the GED Practice Tests (63%), the GED Tests (53%), and the TABE Survey Edition (42%). Those indicated by responding vocational-technical schools included The Official GED Practice Tests (50%) and the TABE Complete Battery Edition (50%). School districts, intermediate units, vocational-technical schools and state correctional institutions rely on the same four instruments -- the TABE Survey Edition, the TABE Complete Battery Edition, the Official GED Practice Tests, and the GED Tests -- for reporting learner gains and for other purposes.

Community-based organizations indicated that The Official GED Practice Tests (55%) and the GED Tests (31%) were used for purposes other than reporting learner gains. Literacy councils indicated using The Official GED Practice Tests (38%), the TABE Survey Edition (33%), and the GED Tests (29%). For libraries, The GED Practice Tests (44%) and the GED Tests (33%) were followed by the TABE Survey Edition, the BEST, and SORT all at 22%. Community colleges indicated using the GED Practice Tests and the TABE Complete Battery Edition (both at 45%), followed by the GED Tests at 36%. Universities indicated use of the Official GED Practice Tests (60%), followed by the TABE Complete Battery Edition and the SORT (both at 20%). Community-based organizations and school districts tended to report using the widest variety of instruments for purposes other than reporting learner gains. For agencies other than school districts, intermediate units, vocational-technical schools and state correctional institutions, the SORT and the BEST appeared as lesser-used choices.

Summary. The most remarkable thing about these results is the extent to which the pattern of assessment instrument usage is similar across types of agencies and purposes (either reporting learner gains to the state or other purposes). Four instruments -- the TABE Survey Edition, the TABE Complete Battery Edition, the GED Tests, and by far the most often, the Official GED Practice Tests, appear to be used by most agencies for most purposes. The most popular instruments for reporting learner gains appear to be the Official GED Practice Tests, the GED Tests, the TABE Survey and Complete Battery, and the BEST. A "second tier" in popularity for reporting learner gains would include the ABLE, CASAS, and the WRAT. The TABE Survey and Complete Battery, Official GED Practice Tests, and the BEST, along with the ABLE and CASAS, are included in the basic 12 hour "Assessment for Adult Learners" training module that is required of all ABLE-funded agencies and are accepted by the Bureau for reporting learning gains. It appears that ABLE-funded agencies have

widely adopted several of the appropriate and highly publicized instruments. The results should be interpreted cautiously, keeping in mind that the data resulted from agency self-reports and did not include all ABLE-funded agencies.

Objective 2: To research, through a follow-up telephone survey with select agencies responding to the mail survey, why agencies are using particular instruments for pre- and post-testing, identify needs and constraints guiding the selection of assessment instruments, identify gaps or areas where appropriate instruments are critically needed, and to report these findings.

The proposal indicated that the Project Coordinator would conduct telephone interviews with 5 - 10% of survey respondents (216 agencies), or between 11 and 22 agencies. Telephone surveys were conducted at the end of the project year in order to capture respondents' year of experience with the instruments. Telephone contacts were made with 58 agencies and a total of 29 interviews were completed, representing 13% of responding agencies (a large number of calls were made to ensure the targeted number of responses, as some individuals contacted were not available or did not respond to a request for a call back). The Project Coordinator set out to contact a sample of agencies proportionally representing the nine agency types appearing in the tables in Appendices C and E. Thus, since 30% of the group of responding agencies were CBOs, the project coordinator aimed to complete 7 interviews with CBOs, or 30% of 22 agencies. Since 41% of responding agencies were school districts, the Project Coordinator aimed to complete 4 interviews with school districts, or 41% of 22 agencies, and so forth. The following table shows the number of agencies targeted for each category type, and the number of interviews actually completed with agencies in that category type:

	Number of Interviews Targeted	Number of Contacts Made	Number of Interviews Completed
Community-based Orgs.	7	15	9
School Districts	4	14	4
Literacy Councils	2	8	6
State Corr. Insts.	2	5	2
Intermediate Units	2	4	3
Community Colleges	1	1	1
Libraries	1	4	2
Vo-tech Schools	1	4	1
Universities	1	3	1
Total	21	58	29

The Project Coordinator contacted a sampling of agencies across the state (east, central, and west) within each category type. She also contacted some agencies who indicated on the survey use of instruments for reporting learner that were less common but that may have been of potential use to other agencies for their student gains reporting (e.g., SLEP, AMES, or WBST).

The telephone interview consisted of a set of structured questions directed to the individual who had completed the mail survey (usually an administrator) or to an individual recommended by the person who had completed the survey (for example, a teacher who administered or interpreted the results of an assessment). The questions asked, for each instrument indicated on the survey as one being used to report learner gains:

1. why/how the instrument was picked;

2. how the instrument is working for the agency; and

3. successes and problems or gaps with the instrument.

A final question asked the interviewee to identify any assessment needs they have for which they do not have an appropriate instrument. It was thought that these questions would identify why agencies are using particular instruments for reporting, the qualities they look for in selecting instruments for reporting, and gaps or areas where instruments are needed.

The following table shows the number and percentage of the sample providing a particular type of service:

	Number of Agencies Providing	Percentage of Agencies Providing
Basic Literacy	18	62
Adult Basic Education	26	90
General Equivalency Diploma Level	23	79
English as a Second Language	18	62
Work-focus	6	21
Family Literacy	4	14

The following table shows the number and percentage of the sample using a particular assessment instrument to report learner gains:

	Number of Agencies Using	Percentage of Agencies Using
Official GED Practice Tests	13	45
GED Tests	8	28
TABE Survey	9	31
TABE Complete Battery	9	31
BEST	12	41
ABLE	3	10
CASAS	3	10
WRMT	4	14
WBST	2	7
SLEP	2	7
AMES	2	7
WRAT	1	3
READ	1	3

The information on the instruments being used by the telephone interview sample to report learner gains shows that the profile of the sample is very similar to that of the profile of the mail survey respondents: widespread use of the Official GED Practice Tests and GED Tests, the two editions of the TABE, and the BEST. Use of the more "exotic" instruments is over-represented, due to the fact that the Project Coordinator specifically contacted agencies using these tests.

How instruments used for reporting learner gains were selected by agencies. The most commonly reported reason for selecting an instrument across the board was that it was accepted for state reporting of learner gains. In the case of the TABE editions, particularly, some interviewees reported long-time use of the

instrument, satisfaction with it (at least for the most part), and the fact that it met Bureau requirements for an instrument used for reporting learner gains. Many interviewees also indicated that an instrument was picked because, upon examination, it looked like it would fulfill needed functions. Reasons less often cited included that it was recommended by another agency working with a similar audience and fulfilling a similar purpose, or that it was user-friendly and student-friendly (those using ABLE were likely to mention the student-friendliness of this instrument). Cost was rarely mentioned as a reason for selecting and instrument, although it was sometimes mentioned as a reason why only one instrument was used throughout the agency for reporting learner gains.

How instruments used for reporting learner gains are working: Successes, problems, and gaps. It should be noted that many of the contacted agencies serving literacy and ESL learners have only begun using any standardized assessment in response to the Bureau's requirement to do so, so some interviewees have only been working with their instruments for one to two years. Most agencies are supplementing use of their primary instrument or instruments for reporting learner gains with other standardized or informal assessments, indicating that seldom does one (or even a pair) of standardized assessments show all learners needs or gains. This is an extremely positive finding, indicating use of good testing practices by responding agencies.

For contacted agencies serving ABE and GED level learners, the TABE Complete Battery Edition, Survey Edition, the ABLE, and the combination of the GED Practice Tests/GED Tests appear to be serving needs regarding reporting learner gains and providing at least minimal prescriptive information for guiding and planning instruction. The Official GED Practice Tests were thought by most contacted agencies to be a good predictor of a student's performance on the GED Tests. However, a few

contacted agencies working with GED-level learners indicated that they felt the Official GED Practice Tests were not a good predictor of performance on the GED Tests, and expressed concern that often scores would decrease from the Practice Tests to the GED Tests (this may occur even if the GED Tests were passed). This is a concern for agencies anxious to show learner gains. It is beyond the scope of this project to speculate as to why this might be happening in some agencies. Many contacted agencies working with very beginning literacy learners on reading skills expressed concern that the TABE editions, particularly, but to some extent the ABLE as well, are not appropriate indicators of these students' needs nor able to show gains made by these learners. This is a problem as well for agencies serving adult learners in other states (Alamprese, 1998). Even the new Level L version of the TABE, which is designed to measure pre-reading and reading skills of these lowest level learners, was thought by some (but not all) of these interviewees to be inadequate in diagnosing needs or indicating gains for these learners. One frustration may be caused by the fact that the Pre-Reading Skills subtest of Level L (which covers matching letters, recognizing letters, and recognizing beginning, middle, and ending sounds) does not yield a reportable score for tracking learner gains (raw scores only, not scale scores nor grade equivalents, can be obtained from this section). It should be noted, however, that TABE and ABLE were thought by others to do a fine job for these beginning-level learners. The WRMT was described enthusiastically by three of the four interviewees using it as an instrument that works well with basic-level readers. The AMES was mentioned by two interviewees as something they intended to look into for use with these learners; unfortunately neither of the two agencies who were currently using AMES in the phone sample were using it with basic-level readers, and thus could not comment on its usefulness with this population.

Two interviewed agencies (school districts) using the WRAT either currently or in the past with ABE- and GED-level learners felt that it provided little useful information for either diagnosing needs or tracking learner gains.

Several contacted agencies who are working with a work-focus population in an ABLE setting (particularly those who are focusing on a specific career area, such as nursing, rather than general employment-related literacy skills) also indicated that the TABE editions and the Practice Tests/GED Tests do not identify these students' needs nor show gains made by these learners. The WBST was briefly explored in conversations with two of the interview respondents as an instrument that might be appropriate for use with this population; however, the two agencies using it had limited experience with it. One mentioned that it is not an appropriate instrument for use with low-level learners; the other felt that it had not been what she had expected, mostly due, she felt, to lack of training in appropriate use of the instrument.

For contacted agencies serving the ESL population, the BEST is generally viewed favorably in terms of reporting learner gains and providing at least minimal prescriptive information for guiding and planning instruction. The general exception to this is for the upper-level ESL student, greater numbers of whom are increasingly being seen in ABLE-funded programs. The SLEP was explored during the course of the interviews with the two agencies who are using it as a potentially useful instrument with this group of learners. However, those agencies gave the SLEP a mixed review. One interviewee indicated that questions seemed difficult and did not appear to relate to everyday life; also, the instrument did not appear to adequately measure learner gains. The other interviewee felt that it provided a good measure of listening comprehension.

Summary. While the sample of agencies who participated in the telephone interview are generally satisfied with the instruments they are using for reporting learner gains, especially when supplemented by other measures for diagnosis of needs

and demonstration of gains, three areas where appropriate instruments are needed were identified:

1. Instruments that will better detect instructional needs and educational gain of beginning-level adult readers in ABLE programs;

2. Instruments that will better detect instructional needs and educational gain of learners focusing on a specific career area, such as nursing (rather than general employment-related literacy skills);

3. Instruments that will better detect instructional needs and educational gain of upper-level ESL learners who have progressed beyond the functional level measured by the BEST.

The need for instruments for beginning-level readers and upper-level ESL has also been brought to the attention of project staff by Bill Murphy of the ABLE Bureau.

Objective 3: To gather information on standardized assessments that meet the Bureau's requirements and that may be appropriate for populations served by ABLE programs, including literacy, ABE, GED, ESL, and work-focus.

In November, 1998, the project staff contacted Cheryl Keenan, Sonny Sloan, and Ella Morin of the ABLE Bureau for input regarding whether it would be fruitful to contact states known to be doing work with the populations named in the project proposal. The purpose of the state contacts would be to ask which standardized assessments their funded service-providing agencies use for reporting learner gains and what criteria or restrictions, if any, are placed on the standardized instruments their agencies may use, in the hopes of identifying candidate instruments for use in Pennsylvania that are not currently well-known in Pennsylvania. Our Bureau leaders, along with Judy Alamprese of Abt Associates, advised that most of the states are using the same generalized literacy instruments and standardized instruments targeted to ESL

learners to measure learner gains as those are currently used in Pennsylvania, including ABLE, TABE, CASAS assessments, and BEST. Therefore, they believed that such contacts would probably not gain much useful information. However, Ms. Alamprese noted that Abt Associates had completed a review of standardized reading instruments that are appropriate for use with first-level adults in programs participating in their national study of gains made by first-level adults participating in basic skills instruction. Abt Associates had chosen a combination of subtests of the Nelson Reading Skills Test (Word Analysis, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension), the WRAT-III (Reading -- i.e. word recognition -- and Spelling), and the Woodcock-Johnson Revised Tests of Achievement (Background Knowledge and Word Attack) for assessing the gains of these learners in their project (Voight & Alamprese, 1998). These subtests were selected because they are standardized instruments that have been normed using large stratified samples; show evidence of reliability and validity; in combination, measure seven constructs that reflect strategies that successful readers have mastered (word analysis; isolated word recognition; vocabulary; spelling; comprehension; fluency; and background knowledge); have simple requirements for administration; and can be administered quickly (in less than 35 minutes). The authors did note that the Nelson Reading Skills Test provides norms only on children. Project staff collected information on and samples of these assessments to examine them and determine whether they may be of use to and useable by program staff in reporting learning gains of basic-level readers.

The Project Coordinator utilized several other strategies to identify instruments that may be appropriate for populations served by ABLE programs in addition to those that had been identified through the research phase of the project. The focus was geared especially toward identifying instruments that would address the needs identified by the research phase of the project and Bill Murphy: instruments for basic-level

readers, instruments for upper-level ESL learners, and instruments for career-focused individuals. These strategies included 1) noting instruments that were being asked about on the Project EQUAL listserve, in questions directed to the Project Coordinator in her role as a statewide resource person on assessment issues, and during the assessment module training sessions conducted throughout the state; 2) noting instruments that were recommended by Bill Murphy for review as he worked with agencies around their assessment and reporting issues; 3) reviewing the adult education literature; 4) reviewing publisher's assessment catalogs; and 5) keeping abreast of developments with the CareerLinks Centers and assessment issues that may arise from ABLE-funded agencies' coordination with these Centers. Through these strategies, a variety of instruments was identified for further review. All six standardized but lesser-used instruments that ABLE-funded programs are using to report learner gains (see Objective 1) were included in the review: WRAT-III, WBST, SLEP, WRMT-R, AMES, and SORT-R.

Instruments for basic-level readers. In addition to the combination of subtests identified by Abt Associates, the instruments identified for further review for their possible usefulness for basic-level readers included: WRMT-R (a standardized instrument identified by agencies participating in the telephone interview as being useful for basic-level readers); AMES (another instrument identified by agencies participating in the telephone interview as being potentially useful with basic-level readers; and the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (suggested by Bill Murphy as an instrument being used by literacy councils for reporting educational gains that may be useful for the beginning reader population).

Instruments for upper-level ESL learners. The instruments identified for further review for their possible usefulness with upper-level ESL learners included: the SLEP (a standardized identified through the project research); the BESTEL

(identified by Bill Murphy as an instrument that at least one agency was using for reporting learner gains and speaking of favorably); and the Adult Language Assessment Scales (LAS) published by CTB/McGraw-Hill.

Instruments for work-focus (especially career-focus) learners. The instruments identified for further review for their possible usefulness with work-focus/career-focus learners included: the WBST (a standardized instrument identified through the project research), Work Keys (being discussed for possible inclusion in the CareerLinks Centers assessment battery), and the TABE Work-Related Foundation Skills instrument (identified by Adult Education and Job Training Center staff as potentially useful for their workplace literacy program). It should be noted that the CASAS Employability Competency System provides a criterion-referenced, competency-based tool for assessing general pre-employment competencies, although it would not address career-specific needs.

Other instruments selected for further review. Four additional instruments were selected for review to see whether they met the Bureau's requirements for instruments appropriate for use with ABLE learners: the SORT-R and the WRAT-III (identified through results of the mail survey as standardized instruments that are being used by some agencies to report learner gains); the Basic Occupational Literacy Test (BOLT) (identified when two programs who wish to use it contacted the Project Coordinator to discuss the appropriateness of the test with a work- or life-skills focused ABLE populations); and the Test of Applied Literacy Skills (TALS), a standardized test for adults publicized by Educational Testing Service but not currently used in Pennsylvania ABLE programs according to the survey.

Information on these instruments (including descriptions of how the test was developed and standardized, information on the norming group, information on reliability and validity, and samples of the instrument and directions for administration)

was collected from the publishers of the instruments during the second half of the project.

Objective 4: To examine potential instruments, and those that are being used in agencies, to determine their appropriateness of use related to the Bureau's requirements.

All instruments were examined to determine whether they meet the Bureau's requirements for instruments to be used for reporting learner gains, in terms of being standardized on an appropriate population and having at least two equivalent forms for use in pre-testing and post-testing. Also, ease of use by ABLE agencies was considered; that is, could staff in ABLE programs reasonably be expected to use the instrument in the way it was intended to be used given the varied backgrounds of staff and volunteers in programs and the demanding context that they work within? Based on this review, a recommendation was made regarding whether each instrument should be added to or retained on the Bureau's list of acceptable instruments for reporting learner gains.

The following sections summarize reviews of and provide recommendations regarding instruments in four categories: instruments for general ABE/GED populations; instruments for basic-level readers; instruments for upper-level ESL learners; and instruments for work-focus/career focus learners.

Instruments for general ABE/GED populations. The SORT-R is a standardized, quick screening instrument that uses a word recognition task as a measure of reading level. The SORT-R has documented reliability, validity, and is normed on adults; however, it does not provide equivalent forms for use in pre- and post-testing. The SORT-R is not on the July, 1998 list of acceptable instruments for reporting learner gains, and should not be placed on the list.

The WRAT-III is intended to measure achievement of the "codes" needed to learn the basic skills of reading (letter reading and word decoding), spelling, and arithmetic. The manual gives evidence for reliability and validity of the tests, and it includes an adult norming group. Two forms (blue and tan) make it possible to use the test in a pre-test/post-test context. However, with such narrow content, it is doubtful that the WRAT-III provides any real useful information to agencies. With only two brief alternative forms, any gains shown from test to test could likely be due to increased test familiarity. Two school districts interviewed as part of the follow-up survey to this project indicated that the WRAT did not provide useful information for tracking needs or reporting learner gains. The WRAT is currently on the July 1998 list of acceptable instruments for reporting learner gains; for the reasons noted above, it should be removed from the list.

The AMES is an instrument that has been used by a few agencies for reporting learner gains to the state. It is normed on adults; provides evidence of reliability and validity; and consists of several levels each with two alternative forms. Level A, the lowest level, is intended for use with adults with 1 - 2 years of schooling or those who may be limited-English-proficient or ESL learners. It measures pre-reading and reading skills including knowledge of beginning, ending, and middle sounds; reading simple signs and symbols; simple vocabulary; and sentence comprehension. A second section measures beginning applied math problem solving. Levels B through E are designed for adults who have completed varying levels of schooling, from 3 to 4 years for Level B through 9 or more years for Level E. Levels B through E measure reading (passage and document comprehension) communication (writing conventions, use of a dictionary or thesaurus, filling out forms) computation, and applied problem solving. The tests appear to have more adult-focused content, with items looking more real-world, than those of some other instruments used with school populations. A locator

instrument is used to place students into one of the levels. Levels B through E are equated onto one scale, and yield raw scores, percentile ranks, stanines, and grade equivalents. Level A yields only raw scores, percentile ranks, and stanines; no grade level equivalents can be obtained. The Total Level A scores combines both the reading and math subtests; a total reading level score alone cannot be calculated. "AMES Complete Battery" and "AMES Locator" are included on the July 1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting learner gains. Given the function of the locator instrument, it should not be allowed for reporting learner gains. The AMES Complete Battery should be kept on the list, however.

TALS was not indicated by any agencies responding to the survey as an instrument that is currently being used to report learner gains. The TALS was developed by Educational Testing Service and is a refinement of the instruments used in three national large-scale assessments of adult literacy: the NAEP Young Adult Literacy survey, the Workplace Literacy Assessment, and the National Adult Literacy Survey. The tests take a "profile" approach to measuring literacy that is different from the traditional academic skills approach or a competency based approach. The Young Adult Literacy Survey yielded evidence for three distinct aspects of literacy: prose, document, and quantitative. The tests measure each of these three profiles through two forms, A or B. Field-testing and norming of the tests was completed with adults. Evidence for reliability and some evidence of validity is provided. Subjects perform the tasks in the test booklets and mark their answers directly in the booklet. Tests yield a proficiency score for each profile on a scale of approximately 100 - 500. No grade level equivalents are given. According to the test manual, the tests may be used for estimating proficiency levels, providing planning information and selection of materials, and measuring growth and progress; however, little guidance is given about how to do this. The tests were field-tested using an adult population. The tests seem

as though they would be too difficult for beginning-level learners in reading or math. TALS is on the July, 1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting learner gains and would do no harm by remaining on the list. It is difficult to see how agencies would use the instrument; however, as it does meet the requirements for a test acceptable for standardized reporting, it may provide a useful function for some agencies and thus should remain on the list if possible.

Instruments for basic-level readers. The survey results coupled with the follow-up telephone interview results indicated that some agencies are finding that frequently-used tests of general literacy skills, i.e. TABE and ABLE, are working to document evidence of learning gains and provide guidance for instructional interventions with beginning-level readers. The new TABE Level L introduced with TABE 7&8 measures pre-reading skills, including matching letters, recognizing letters, and knowledge of beginning, ending, and middle sounds; reading skills measured at this level include recognizing signs, word meaning, and context, phrase, and sentence meaning. Using this level for student reporting is hampered, however, because, as previously noted, the pre-reading section yields only raw scores. While ABLE Level 1 measures the constructs of beginning vocabulary, simple passage/document comprehension, and spelling rather than "pre-reading" skills, it was mentioned a couple of times specifically during the follow-up telephone interviews as being "student-friendly." ABLE does meet the Bureau's requirements for instruments acceptable for student reporting. Clearly, however, the results of the research showed that these instruments are not meeting the needs of ABLE agencies for detecting instructional needs or documenting educational gain of these learners.

The CASAS, which is just beginning to be adopted by agencies in Pennsylvania, does offer some options for assessment of basic-level readers through the Life Skills System's Beginning Literacy Reading assessments (Forms 27 and 28)

and potentially through the Tests for Developmental Disabilities, Levels AA through AAAA (the Tests for Developmental Disabilities are not designed for use with ESL learners or those with learning disabilities). The CASAS takes a competency-based approach that measures basic skills through life skills; this approach is different from the traditional view of reading as a set of basic skills, including word analysis, word recognition, vocabulary, comprehension, etc., measured by many tests of beginning-level reading. However, for some Pennsylvania agencies whose philosophies and instructional methods provide a good match to the competency approach, the CASAS instruments could provide some sound options for identifying needs and documenting gains of basic-level readers. The Life Skills System was introduced in Pennsylvania during the last project year through the basic-level (Initial Implementation Training) provided by the Training Module Project. The Tests for Developmental Disabilities are not covered through this basic-level training, but the potential of bringing training in this system to Pennsylvania as a way of addressing the needs of agencies working with basic-level readers should be explored.

AMES was noted in the follow-up telephone interviews as an instrument that was attractive to some respondents as an option to be explored for use with beginning-level readers. Unfortunately, Level A provides only a combined reading and math total score; the fact that a total reading score alone cannot be calculated lessens its potential as an instrument that would be useful to track reading gains of beginning-level readers.

As previously noted, a study by Abt Associates (Voight & Alamprese, 1998) identified a set of instruments to be used for documenting learning gains of first-level readers in their national study. These included subtests of the Nelson Reading Skills Test (Word Analysis, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension); the WRAT-III (Reading -- i.e., Word Recognition, and Spelling); and the Woodcock-Johnson Revised Tests of Achievement (Background Knowledge and Word Attack). The

researchers chose this combination of instruments because together they provided measures of seven constructs important to skilled reading.

The Nelson Reading Skills Test measures word meaning (vocabulary) and passage comprehension at three levels: A, B, and C. Level A includes a measure of word part knowledge (sound/symbol correspondence, root word identification, and syllabication), while Levels B and C include a measure of reading rate. The test is intended to be used with school children in grades three through nine, and the tests were normed on third through ninth graders. Teacher judgment in conjunction with prior test scores is used to assign students to appropriate levels; no locator instrument exists. Evidence for reliability and face validity is provided, and two forms (3 and 4) exist. Grade equivalents may be obtained for the word meaning, comprehension, and reading rate subtests, but not for the word parts subtests. Total Reading raw scores and grade equivalents may be obtained by combining scores of the word meaning and reading comprehension subtests; but the Total Reading Score does not include scores from the word parts or reading rate subtests. The Project Coordinator learned, via a telephone call with Riverside Publishing Company, publishers of the Nelson Reading Skills Test, that the test is being discontinued; no new materials for the current Forms 3 and 4 are being printed and they will only be available until current stock runs out. This advises against promoting any widespread use of the instrument at this point, whether used alone or in conjunction with other instruments. "Nelson Reading" does appear on the July, 1998 list of tests acceptable for ABLE reporting; however, given the fact that the test is being phased out, plus the fact that it is normed on a child rather than adult population, it is probably not advisable even for agencies who may still have materials to use it for reporting learner gains and should thus be removed from the list.

The Woodcock-Johnson Revised Tests of Achievement are part of the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery, a set of individually-administered tests

"for measuring cognitive abilities, scholastic aptitude, and achievement." The tests may be administered for assessing educational needs and growth. The tests were normed on an adult sample, provide evidence for reliability and validity, and have two available forms (A and B). Suggested "Starting Points" in each subtest (based on an estimate by the administrator of the subject's achievement by grade level, "average adult," or "above-average adult") are used to determine which item to begin administration with; basal and ceiling levels are used to reduce testing time. There is a standard battery and a supplemental battery; across these two batteries, several subtests measure reading skills, including: Letter/Word Identification (standard battery); Passage Comprehension" (standard battery); Word Attack (supplemental battery); Vocabulary-Synonyms (supplemental battery); and Vocabulary-Antonyms (supplemental battery). The standard battery also includes three "knowledge" subtests -- Science, Social Studies, and Humanities -- that Abt Associates used to measure adult beginning readers' general background knowledge. Developing readers' abilities may be hampered by lack of academic knowledge that was not acquired over their lifetimes due to poor reading skills. Having a simple measure of background knowledge is an attractive aspect of these tests. The tests yield raw scores, scaled scores, and grade equivalents for each individual subtests and for test clusters including broad reading, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, and broad knowledge; one of the reading clusters could be chosen for LiteracyPro reporting. These tests grew out of a tradition of one-on-one diagnostic assessment of special needs learners. The tests appear as though they would be relatively simple for ABLE staff to learn to administer; however, the manuals are quite daunting and relevant information on scoring and interpretation could be difficult to extract. Training would probably be needed in order to promote widespread adoption of these tests by ABLE programs. "Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery" is currently on the list of acceptable reporting instruments;

as the instruments are appropriate and could provide an option for measuring needs and gains of basic-level readers, this listing should be modified to read "Woodcock-Johnson Revised Tests of Achievement" and the achievement tests should be included on the list.

The WRMT-R was also developed by Richard Woodcock, one of the developers of the Woodcock-Johnson Revised Tests of Achievement. It is an individually-administered instrument similar in concept and format to those tests. It includes a battery of tests that measure important aspects of reading very similar to those on the Tests of Achievement. The manual provides evidence of reliability and validity and adult norms. Two forms of the tests (G and H) are available. Subtests measure the following skills: visual/auditory learning (Form G only); letter identification (Form G only); word identification (word recognition); word attack; word comprehension (vocabulary); and passage comprehension. Raw scores, scaled scores, and grade equivalents are available for individual subtests, "clusters" of subtests (e.g., readiness, basic skills, and reading comprehension), plus an overall total reading cluster. ABLE programs could not report scores in the readiness cluster, because it is measured only by Form G. These tests provide a potentially useful measure for reading skills of basic-level readers, but, for the same reasons mentioned regarding the Woodcock-Johnson Revised Tests of Achievement, would most likely require training for programs interested in using it. The Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-Revised version should remain on the list of acceptable instruments for reporting.

The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests are designed to indicated general reading achievement. The manual gives evidence of the tests' reliability and validity. The tests were normed on kindergarten through 12th graders. The tests consist of several levels, some having one form while others have two forms. The levels include: Pre, which measures literacy concepts, reading instruction relational concepts, oral language

concepts, and letters and letter-sound correspondences (via Form K only); R, which measures use of letter/sound correspondences and use of sentence context (also via Form K only); 1, which measures vocabulary and passage comprehension (again via Form K only); and 2 through 10/12, which measure vocabulary and passage comprehension (each level via 2 forms -- K and L). Each level is designed to be given to students in that corresponding grade in school; it is difficult to see how the instrument would be used with adults because there is no locator procedure, and teachers would essentially need to know the grade level the adult is operating at in order to assign a level. The content of the test is very academically-focused and not geared toward adults in the way that TABE, ABLE, or the CASAS instruments are. The Project Coordinator learned, via a phone call with Riverside Publishing Company, that a new version of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests including an adult level will be available after September, 1999. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests are on the July, 1998 list of instruments acceptable to be used for reporting purposes, but should be removed due to the tests' lack of adult norms, lack of adult-focused content, and the difficulty of selecting a level to use with an adult learner. However, the new version of the tests should be examined as soon as they are available to assess their potential for use in tracking the learning gains of basic-level adult readers.

Instruments for upper-level ESL learners. The CASAS offers some options for assessment of upper-level ESL adults through the Life Skills System and the Employability Competency System. These CASAS systems offer competency-based reading and listening comprehension subtests across a range of ability levels wider than the those of the BEST. Both of these systems were introduced through the Initial Implementation Training in Pennsylvania last year. As more agencies adopt these CASAS systems, they may find that the systems work for these upper-level ESL learners.

The SLEP measures English language ability in listening comprehension and reading comprehension. Section 1 of the test uses recorded samples of spoken English to test listening comprehension. Section 2 measures vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension through written and visual materials. Currently, three forms of the SLEP (1, 2, and 3) are available. It is designed for use with students entering school grades seven through twelve whose native language is other than English, and that was the norming group for the test. The test manual provides evidence for reliability and validity. The test materials utilize situations typical of those encountered in North American secondary schools. The SLEP is on the July, 1998 ABLE list of instruments acceptable for reporting learning gains. Despite the fact that the test is not normed on adults, it should be retained on the list. The SLEP is a sound test that provides one of the few options available for measurement of basic listening and comprehension reading skills outside of a competency-based approach. Just as the Official GED Practice Tests are normed on groups of high-school seniors and are acceptable as measures of adults' attainment of this body of knowledge, so the SLEP can be seen as a test that is worthy of measuring adults' attainment of secondary-level English proficiency. ABLE agencies using the test may be cautioned to confirm its usefulness with their students. Adults from other cultures are not be familiar with American customs and society may be at a disadvantage in performing on the test.

The Adult Language Achievement Scales (LAS) consists of oral language, writing, reading, and math components. The reading and math components have two levels. Performance on the oral language component is used to assign students to the appropriate reading and math levels. Two forms (A and B) of each component are available. The oral language component is administered one-on-one and both the oral language and writing components utilize holistic scoring. The test manual provides a training exercise for establishing inter-rater reliability in the scoring procedures. The

Adult LAS is the latest iteration in a series of tests that have been in development since the late 1970s. The tests do not provide a standard score scale, and so are not "standardized" tests. The Adult LAS may provide programs with some useful informal assessment information, but at this time the Adult LAS should not be added to the list of instruments acceptable for reporting learner gains.

The BESTEL is a revision of the STEL forms listed on the July, 1998 ABLE list of acceptable tests for reporting. It is published by the Association of Classroom Teacher Testers. The Project Coordinator tried to contact the Association several times at their last known mailing address in Montecito, CA, through their telephone number, and through their web site. She was unable to contact anyone in order to request further information or materials for review. Thus, at this point, this project cannot address whether the STEL/BESTEL should be retained on the list or removed.

Instruments for work-focus/career-specific learners. Work Keys assessments are part of the Work Keys system developed by ACT for documenting and improving workplace skills. The Work Keys system provides, among other services, opportunities for specific job profiling within a company. Work Keys assessments provide an avenue for measuring individuals' skill levels to determine how they compare to the skills needed by specific jobs. Eight criterion-referenced assessments exist, including listening, reading for information, writing, applied mathematics, applied technology, locating information, observation, and teamwork. Because the tests are highly secure, the Project Coordinator was unable to obtain actual samples of the tests or detailed technical information about them. However, according to descriptions published by ACT, they appear to yield scores on a broad scale of 3 - 7. The fact that the score scale is so broad indicates that it would most likely not be useful for meeting ABLE's needs in tracking learner gains. It is not clear that at least two forms of each of the tests exist. It is not clear whether Work Keys would be

appropriate for career-specific audiences as well as work-focus audiences. It does not appear that Work Keys should currently be added to the list of acceptable reporting instruments. However, if it is adopted by the CareerLinks system more information on the assessments may become available, and if it does, a reassessment of the instruments should be done at that time.

The WBST provides a relatively brief but psychometrically sound measure of basic reading and math skills through two subtests: verbal and quantitative. Good evidence for reliability and validity is provided by the user's manual. The tests were normed on an adult population and two forms of each subtest (1 and 2) are provided. The verbal skills test assesses students' abilities to locate, understand, and use information in various formats, including maps, charts, and other written information; recognize word meanings in context; and recognize and identify proper grammar and sentence construction. The quantitative skills test measures basic math computation, quantitative evaluation, algebra, and geometry. Scoring can be done only with a computer disk provided by Wonderlic Incorporated, developers of the test. It appears that test data must be manually entered into the computer. Results of the WBST can be compared to the basic skills requirements of various occupations listed in the U. S. Department of Labor's "Dictionary of Occupational Titles." The "Dictionary of Occupational Titles" lists the math and language skill requirements of jobs in terms of the six-level General Educational Development (GED) Scale. The WBST measures skills at the lowest three GED Scale levels, and provides a score on a scale of 1 to 500 for verbal and quantitative skills at each of the first three GED levels as well as a composite score for verbal and quantitative skills. It also provides a Total Verbal Skills Score and Total Quantitative Skills Score and grade level equivalents for verbal and quantitative skills that could be used for ABLE reporting. Unfortunately, the WBST provides grade level equivalents only for grades six through 12, indicating that the

tests measure the upper-ABE and GED skill range and that they are most appropriate for those populations. The WBST is on the July, 1998 list of acceptable instruments for reporting and should remain as a measure of basic skills that can be linked to skill needs of a variety of occupations. Clearly it is a measure appropriate for work-focus rather than career-specific populations.

The TABE Work-Related Foundations Skills assessment is essentially an extension of TABE 7&8, and as such is not appropriate for career-specific learners. It assesses the TABE 7&8 objectives at Level D in Trade/Technical, Health, or Business/Office contexts; students who need a different level or alternative form of the tests are administered another level of TABE 7&8 or forms 7 or 8 of Level D. TABE Work-Related Foundation Skills is not included on the July, 1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting learner gains, and should probably not be noted separately in future lists as it is an extension of TABE 7&8.

The BOLT was developed in the 1970s as an assessment of basic literacy skills by the U. S. Department of Labor for use in the Manpower programs. The BOLT measures basic reading and arithmetic skill at four levels; fundamental, basic intermediate, intermediate, and advanced. There are four subtests: reading vocabulary, reading comprehension, arithmetic computation, and arithmetic reasoning. These may be administered independently. Each subtest has two or three alternative forms at each level. The appropriate level of each subtest to administer a student is determined by using scores from the Wide Range Scale (a locator test) and the individual's reported years of education. The BOLT yields raw scores, standard scores, and GED Scale levels (1 - 4). The tests were normed on adults. The manual that describes development of the tests provides no evidence for validity of the tests. The tests are extremely brief and inexpensive, but unfortunately, narrow in content and probably not adequate as a measure of learner gains needed by ABLE. BOLT is not on the July,

1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting and should not be included on future lists.

Objective 5: To develop a revised listing of acceptable standardized instruments, to be used by agencies for reporting educational gains, for approval and dissemination by the Bureau.

This section summarizes recommendations to the Bureau for refining its list of instruments acceptable for reporting learner gains based on the findings of the project described to this point. The recommendations are organized to address the needs of the four ABLE populations addressed in this research: ABE/GED learners, basic-level readers, ESL learners, and work-focus/career-specific learners.

There are several instruments on the July, 1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting learner gains that are not addressed in this project (for example, API, Gilmore Oral Reading Test, Stanford Achievement Test, and others). Response to the survey indicated that these instruments may be used by one or two programs if at all. Generally, these instruments should probably be removed from the list unless a sound case for including them can be made. Each test would need to be reviewed to determine whether it meets the Bureau's requirements for acceptable reporting instruments.

ABE/GED population.

1. The SORT-R, while it continues to be used for reporting learner gains by some agencies according to the results of the mail survey, does not provide equivalent forms. It is not on the July, 1998 list of acceptable reporting instruments and should remain off of the list.

2. The WRAT-III is on the July, 1998 list but should be removed due to the fact that it is an extremely brief instrument designed to measure only the "codes" of reading, spelling, and math. It appears to provide little useful information regarding the Bureau's requirements for tracking learner gains.

3. AMES is a little-used, but sound, adult-focused instrument that would be useful for tracking gains of the ABE/GED population. Both the AMES locator and Complete Battery are listed on the July, 1998 list of acceptable instrument. The intended function of the locator makes it inappropriate for use in reporting learner gains to the state, and so the locator should be removed from the list; however, the AMES Complete Battery should remain on the list.

4. The TALS is a sound instrument that provides a unique approach to assessing the skill levels of ABE/GED level learners and so should be retained on the list of acceptable reporting instruments.

5. The July, 1998 list of acceptable instruments for reporting includes both the TABE locator and ABLE "short form." These are locator instruments and, as such, are not suitable for use in reporting learner gains. These instruments should be removed from future lists.

6. Contemporary's "Diagnostic Pre-tests for GED Instruction" and "Evaluative Post-tests for GED Readiness," while they are undoubtedly useful for identifying student needs regarding preparation and readiness for the GED tests, are non-standardized instruments and as such should not be included on the list of instruments acceptable for reporting learning gains. Generally, informal curriculum-based GED readiness assessments are inappropriate for inclusion on this list. At this point, only Steck-Vaughn's print version of the Official Practice Tests and Contemporary's software version of the Official GED Practice Tests can provide standardized data on learner gains and are thus appropriate to include on the list.

Basic-level readers.

1. The READ and the Brigance Diagnostic Inventories for adults are informal inventories that will be very useful for some agencies in diagnosing specific skill needs of beginning readers. However, as informal inventories, they are

inappropriate to include on the list of acceptable reporting instruments. The READ and the Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Essential Skills are on the July, 1998 list of acceptable reporting instruments, but should be deleted from future lists.

2. CASAS' Life Skills System Beginning Literacy Reading assessments and Tests for Developmental Disabilities have potential for tracking the gains of beginning readers through a competency-based approach. The Life Skills system was introduced in Pennsylvania during the last project year; some agencies are beginning to adopt the system and its success in meeting the needs of this population should be tracked. The Tests for Developmental Disabilities were are not covered in the basic-level training introduced in Pennsylvania last year. The potential of this system to meet the needs of these learners should be explored.

3. Use of the combination of instruments proposed by Abt Associates for tracking the learning gains of the basic-level readers in their national study (Nelson Reading Skills Test [Word Analysis, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension], the WRAT-III [Reading -- i.e. word recognition -- and Spelling], and the Woodcock-Johnson Revised Tests of Achievement [Background Knowledge and Word Attack]) is not feasible at this time: the Nelson Reading Skills Test has been discontinued and test materials will not be available once current stock runs out. A combination of some other instruments that measure at least some of the same constructs could be considered. How use of such a combination instruments would be compatible with LiteracyPro would need to be explored.

4. "Nelson Reading" appears on the July, 1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting gains. The Nelson Reading Skills Test is a sound instrument that is normed on children rather than adults; thus, it is not advisable for agencies who may still have materials to use it in isolation for reporting learner gains. This, coupled

with the fact that the test is being phased out, indicates that it should be removed from future lists.

5. The Woodcock-Johnson Revised Tests of Achievement are part of the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery which is included on the July, 1998 version of the reporting list. These tests could provide a one-on-one approach for measuring some of the skills and background knowledge of basic-level readers; the feasibility of their expanded use with basic-level readers should be explored. The complexity of the manual and its guidelines for administering, interpreting, and scoring the tests indicate that developing training for program staff around the instrument may be prudent. The Woodcock-Johnson Revised Tests of Achievement should be retained on future lists of instruments acceptable for reporting.

6. The WRMT-R is an instrument similar in concept and format to the Woodcock-Johnson Revised Tests of Achievement that focuses on reading skills. Programs who wanted to adopt these tests would most likely benefit from training in proper use of the tests. Subtests measure basic reading skills; results of the subtests can be summarized into three clusters, including readiness, basic skills, and reading comprehension. ABLE programs could not report scores in the readiness cluster, because these subtests are measured through only one form. The feasibility of expanded use of this instrument with basic-level readers should also be explored. "Woodcock Reading Mastery Test" is included in the July, 1998 and the Revised version should be included in future lists.

7. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests are on the July, 1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting purposes, but should be removed due to the lack of adult norms, adult-focused content, and the difficulty of assigning adult learners to an appropriate level of the tests (no locator instrument exists). A revised version including

an adult level will be available after September, 1999, and should be reviewed to assess its potential for tracking needs and gains of basic-level readers.

ESL learners.

1. ESLOA is an informal instrument that some interviewees mentioned in the follow-up telephone survey as being similar to the BEST and useful for very low-level ESL learners with its oral assessment component. It is included on the July, 1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting learner gains, but as an informal instrument, is not suitable for this purpose. ESLOA should be removed from future versions of the list.

2. CASAS offers some options for upper-level ESL assessment through its competency-based Life Skills and Employability Competency Systems. These testes measure reading and listening comprehension. Both of these systems were adopted through Initial Implementation Training in Pennsylvania last year. As more agencies adopt these CASAS systems, they may find them useful for the upper-level ESL population.

3. The SLEP is a sound test that provides one of the few options available for measurement of basic listening and comprehension skills outside of competency-based approach. SLEP is on the July, 1998 list of acceptable reporting instruments and should remain on future lists.

4. The BESTEL is a revision of the STEL forms included on the July, 1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting. Despite numerous attempts to contact the Association of Classroom Teacher Testers, developers of the BESTEL, the Project Coordinator was unable to obtain further information about the tests or copies for review. At this point, the project cannot directly address whether STEL/BESTEL should be retained on the list or be removed. Lack of responsiveness on the part of the

test developers indicates that this assessment would not provide a realistic option for expanded use with ESL learners.

Work-focus/career-specific learners.

1. No standardized instruments suitable for tracking the learner gains of career-specific learners (e.g., certified nursing assistant trainees) were located during the course of this project.

2. The WBST provides a sound option for tracking basic reading and math skills of work-focus learners. The WBST is attractive because its results can be compared to basic skill requirements of various occupations listed in the U. S. Department of Education's "Dictionary of Occupational Titles." The tests are most appropriate for upper-ABE and GED populations. The WBST is on the July, 1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting and should remain on future lists.

3. The BOLT is an extremely brief measure of basic reading and math skills developed during the 1970s for use in the Manpower programs. The development manual provides no evidence for validity of the tests. The tests are, unfortunately, too narrow in content to adequately measure learning gains needed by ABLE. The BOLT is not on the July, 1998 list of instruments acceptable for reporting, and should not be included on future lists.

Additional Special Issues

In June, 1999, Bill Murphy sent to the project staff a list of additional issues the Bureau hoped the project would address. This section provides comment on each of these issues.

1. Which tests other than the TABE editions, the ABLE, CASAS, the BEST, and the Official GED Practice Tests should be included in the LiteracyPro software systems for reporting learner gains? The LiteracyPro software should be adapted to

accept score entry from all of the instruments included on the revised list of acceptable reporting instruments.

2. Should matching TABE scores with GED scores (via the "GED Predictor Report" published by CTB/McGraw-Hill) be allowed for in the LiteracyPro software? Yes. The "GED Predictor Report" allows GED scores to be estimated from TABE scale scores. Providing an adaptation to the LiteracyPro software that would allow matching TABE scores with GED scores would be a legitimate use of this instrument that would greatly assist agencies in their ability to meet the Bureau's program performance standards.

3. Should tests scores from the subsequent fiscal year by accepted as post-tests by the LiteracyPro software? Should GED tests passed after July 1 be credited to the previous program year? From an assessment point of view, it doesn't matter which fiscal year the pre- and post-testing occurs in, as long as the post-testing is done after a significant amount of instructional hours. Adjustments that support learners and programs in their efforts to advance learner goals should be supported by the software.

4. How much time should elapse before the same form of a test is used again? Is six months adequate? How should students who have intensive programs of study be tested? Should those agencies go beyond 50 hours of instruction before post-testing if those hours are earned within one to two months? Few if any test manuals address this issue directly. However, refraining from using the same form of a test for about six months appears to be a good rule of thumb. Programs and agencies that provide intensive instructional programs, where 50 hours of instruction may be accumulated by a student in a matter of a few weeks, should go beyond 50 hours before re-testing students if necessary, re-testing approximately every three months. This is in line with the current program performance standard which indicates that students should be reassessed after <u>at least</u> 50 hours of instruction. It seems that the ideal would be to

have the LiteracyPro software allow agencies to enter the number of hours of instruction achieved with each re-test (post-test) score (and this may already be done). This would allow the Bureau to track gains as they occur over varying amounts of instructional time (25 hours, 50 hours, 100 hours, etc.).

5. Should agencies be told not to enter scores (into the LiteracyPro software) which are at the top of the distribution for a test level? Should the LiteracyPro software be modified to edit check for that? Agencies should be educated to understand which test scores for the instrument they are using are inappropriate for assessing gain or providing information for instructional planning, and to identify instances when re-assessing a particular learner may be necessary. It seems at this time, however, that modifying the LiteracyPro software to edit check for this is not advisable; these instances are not always clear and sometimes require a judgment call based on the circumstances of the particular student, etc.

6. Should the Bureau disallow reporting scores of short tests such as the SORT, WRAT, BOLT, or GATB? Should the Bureau require individualized sessions for learners for test score debriefing? The project provided evidence that the SORT-R, the BOLT, and the WRAT-III are not appropriate for meeting the Bureau's needs in terms of providing sound information on student learning gains. The current project did not review the GATB. While it seems that encouraging individualized meetings with all learners for the purpose of test score debriefing and goal setting would be ideal, providing commentary on this issue is beyond the scope of this project.

Evaluation Techniques, Instruments, and Results

Throughout the project, the project staff worked closely with Bureau staff to monitor progress toward project goals. The design of the project ensured that the field contributed to identifying standardized assessment instruments that could be used to document educational gains of ABLE populations.

Procedures for the Dissemination of the Findings and Products

The Final Report will be disseminated through the Adult Education and Job *Training Center*, the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, ABLE's regional Professional Development Centers, and the AdvancE State Literacy Resource Center.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This project provided some sound data for assisting the Bureau as it began the process of revising its list of instruments acceptable for reporting learner gains. A general recommendation to the Bureau is to strive for including as wide a range as possible of acceptable instruments for each population to allow agencies choice in selecting an instrument that matches their program goals and philosophies and learner needs. Clearly, at this point in time, this list is relatively short for each of the relevant populations. Each instrument, obviously, will have pros and cons associated with its use, and the Bureau should continue to encourage agencies, as it has in the past, to use a variety of standardized and informal instruments to obtain the range of assessment information they need. In the future, other possibilities in new or revised instruments should continue to be explored.

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Appendix A:

ABLE Assessment Instruments Survey

ABLE Assessment Instruments
Survey

1. Please check all **published assessment instruments** that you **currently use for pre- and post-testing to report learner gains to the state**:

___ TABE Survey
___ TABE Complete Battery
___ BEST
___ ABLE
___ CASAS
___ Official GED Practice Tests
___ GED Tests
___ READ (Reading Evaluation Adult Diagnosis)
___ ESLOA (English as Second Language Oral Assessment)
___ Other(s): (Please include the publisher of each assessment listed.)
_____
_____

2. Please check all **published assessment instruments** that **you currently use for purposes other than to report learner gains to the state**:

___ TABE Survey
___ TABE Complete Battery
___ BEST
___ ABLE
___ CASAS
___ Official GED Practice Tests
___ GED Tests
___ READ (Reading Evaluation Adult Diagnosis)
___ ESLOA (English as Second Language Oral Assessment)
___ Other(s): (Please include the publisher of each assessment listed.)
_____
_____

3. Identify your agency as one of the following:

___ Literacy Council
___ School District
___ Intermediate Unit
___ Library
___ Community-based Organization
___ Community College
___ Other: _____

4. Name of person filling out survey: _____

Agency: _____

Complete Mailing Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Appendix B:

Survey Respondents by Agency Type

Survey Respondents by Agency Type

Type of Agency	Number Indicating	Percent Indicating
Literacy Council	21	10
School District	41	19
Intermediate Unit	19	9
Library	9	4
Community-based Organization	64	30
Community College	11	5
Institution	1	.5
University	5	2
State Correctional Institution	22	10
Vocational-technical School	6	3
College	2	1
Library Literacy Program	2	1
County Prison	3	1
Post-secondary Trade and Technical School	1	.5
Community Corrections	1	.5
Alternative High School	1	.5
Non-profit	2	1
Union-based Training	1	.5
Correctional Facility	1	.5
Long-term Health Care Facility	1	.5
Social Service Agency	1	.5
Public Housing	1	.5

Appendix C:

Number and Percentage of Each Agency Type Using Instrument
to Report Learner Gains

Number and Percentage of Each Agency Type Using Instrument to Report Learner Gains

Instrument (see key on following page for full name and publisher)	Standardized?	Community-based Organization n=64	School District n=41	Literacy Council n=21	State Correctional Institution n=22	Intermediate Unit n=19	Community College n=11	Library n=9	Vocational-technical School n= 6	University n=5
TABE (Survey Edition)	Y	13 20%	12 29%	10 48%	15 68%	11 58%	3 27%	4 44%	2 33%	1 20%
TABE (Complete Battery Edition)	Y	15 23%	12 29%	6 29%	19 86%	8 42%	5 45%	1 11%	2 33%	4 80%
BEST	Y	18 28%	7 17%	14 67%	2 9%	4 21%	4 36%	2 22%	0	2 40%
ABLE	Y	10 16%	3 7%	2 9%	0	3 16%	1 9%	0	1 17%	0
CASAS	*	5 8%	1 2%	2 10%	0	5 26%	2 18%	0	0	0
Official GED Practice Tests	Y	28 44%	32 78%	14 67%	15 68%	11 58%	8 73%	4 44%	6 100%	2 40%
GED Tests	Y	18 28%	22 54%	8 38%	15 68%	11 58%	8 73%	2 22%	2 33%	2 40%
READ	N	1 2%	1 2%	1 5%	0	0	0	0	0	0
ESLOA	N	4 6%	1 2%	3 14%	0	1 5%	1 9%	1 11%	0	1 20%
WRAT	Y	5 8%	5 12%	1 5%	1 5%	2 10%	0	1 11%	0	0
Brigance Assessments	N	4 6%	2 5%	0	1 5%	1 5%	0	0	0	0
WBST	Y	2 3%	0	1 5%	0	1 5%	0	0	0	0
SLEP	Y	1 2%	1 2%	1 5%	0	1 5%	0	0	0	0
Contemporary GED	N	1 2%	2 5%	0	0	1 5%	0	0	0	0
WRMT	Y	1 2%	0	2 9%	0	0	0	1 11%	0	0
AMES	Y	1 2%	0	0	0	0	0	1 11%	0	1 20%
SORT	Y	1 2%	0	0	0	0	0	2 22%	0	0

* most tests are standardized

Key to Test Abbreviations and Publishers

TABE (Survey)	Tests of Adult Basic Education (Survey)	CTB/McGraw-Hill
TABE (Complete Battery	Tests of Adult Basic Education (Complete Battery)	CTB/McGraw-Hill
BEST	Basic English Skills Test	Center for Applied Linguistics
ABLE	Adult Basic Learning Examination	Harcourt Brace
CASAS	Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System	CASAS
Official GED Practice Tests	Official GED Practice Tests	Steck-Vaughn
GED Tests	GED Tests	GED Testing Service
READ	Reading Evaluation Adult Diagnosis	Literacy Volunteers of America
ESLOA	English as a Second Language Oral Assessment	Literacy Volunteers of America
WRAT	Wide Range Achivement Test	Wide Range, Inc.
Brigance Assessments	Brigance Assessments	Curriculum Associates
WBST	Wonderlic Basic Skills Test	Wonderlic, Inc.
SLEP	Secondary Level English Proficiency Test	Educational Testing Service
Contemporary GED	Contemporary GED	Contemporary
WRMT	Woodcock Reading Mastery Test	AGS
AMES	Adult Measure of Essential Skills	Steck-Vaughn
SORT	Slosson Oral Reading Test	Slosson Educational Publications, Inc.
TABE W-F	Tests of Adult Basic Education Work-Related Foundation Skills	CTB/McGraw-Hill
API	Adult Performance Indicator	Hadley Press

Appendix D:

Other Instruments Used to Report Learner Gains

Other Instruments Used to Report Learner Gains

Botel Word Opposite Test (Follett)
TABE Work-Related Foundation Skills
API (Hadley Press)
MELT
Jerry Johns Basic Reading Inventory (Kendall-Hunt)
GALS
Steck-Vaughn GED 2001
Slosson
Woodcock
RAT
National Service Center (NSC) Test
TASK
Gates-MacGinitie
Stanford Diagnostic Math
Laubach Placement/Diagnostic
Side by Side
Gilmore Oral Reading Test (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)
Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test
Gilmore
Peabody
Iowa

Appendix E:

Number and Percentage of Each Agency Type Using Instrument for Other Purposes

Number and Percentage of Each Agency Type Using Instrument for Other Purposes

Instrument (see key in Appendix C for full name and publisher)	Community-based Organization n=64	School District n=41	Literacy Council n=21	State Correctional Institution n=22	Intermediate Unit n=19	Community College n=11	Library n=9	Vocational-technical School n=6	University n=5
TABE (Survey Edition)	8 13%	9 22%	7 33%	19 86%	8 42%	3 27%	2 22%	1 17%	0
TABE (Complete Battery Edition)	8 13%	5 12%	4 19%	15 68%	5 26%	5 45%	0	3 50%	1 20%
BEST	5 8%	3 7%	4 19%	0	1 5%	1 9%	2 22%	0	0
ABLE	7 11%	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 17%	0
CASAS	3 5%	1 2%	0	0	3 16%	2 18%	0	0	0
Official GED Practice Tests	35 55%	20 49%	8 38%	21 95%	12 63%	5 45%	4 44%	3 50%	3 60%
GED Tests	20 31%	11 27%	6 29%	20 91%	10 53%	4 36%	3 33%	1 17%	0
READ	2 3%	1 2%	1 5%	0	0	0	1 11%	0	0
ESLOA	2 3%	1 2%	4 19%	0	0	1 9%	1 11%	0	0
SORT	4 6%	2 5%	2 9%	2 9%	0	0	2 22%	0	1 20%
WRAT	1 2%	5 12%	0	2 9%	2 11%	1 9%	1 11%	0	0
Contemporary GED	3 5%	1 2%	0	0	0	1 9%	0	0	0
Brigance Assessments	3 5%	1 2%	0	1 5%	2 11%	0	0	0	0
SLEP	1 2%	0	1 5%	0	1 5%	0	0	0	0
TABE-WF	0	0	0	0	0	1 9%	0	0	0
API	0	1 2%	1 5%	0	0	1 9%	0	0	0

Refer to the Key in Appendix C for full names of tests and publisher information

Appendix F:

Other Instruments Used for Other Purposes

Other Instruments Used for Other Purposes

Botel Word Opposite Test (Follett)
TLC Literacy Survey
Steck-Vaughn GED
LITSTART (Michigan Literacy Council)
TABE Work-Related Foundation Skills
TABE 5&6
Bader
AMES (Steck-Vaughn)
Woodcock Reading Mastery Test (AGS - American Guidance Services)
Ekwall
MELT
Side by Side
Wilson Reading Program (Barbara Wilson)
Differential Aptitude Test
BESTEL
Steck-Vaughn GED 2001
Slosson
Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test
Career Orientation and Evaluation Survey (Edits, San Diego, CA)
RAT
Barsch Learning Styles Inventory
Cooper Screening for Information Processing
Botel Complete Battery - Inventory (Follett)
Botel
Contemporary's GED Interactive
TOEFL Practice Test (ETS)
Laubach Placement/Diagnostic
Barsch Learning Style Reference Form (Ray Barsch)
Slosson Intelligence Test (Slosson Publishing Company)
Glencoe Publishers GED Skills Series Pretest
Career Ability Placement Survey (Edits, San Diego, CA)
Peabody
Contemporary's Pre-GED Interactive
Challenger Placement Diagnostic
Career Interest Survey (Edits, San Diego, CA)
BETA IQ
WAIS